Advertisements by Multinationals in Hilly Areas

†4031. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the use of rocks laying along the paths of beautiful hilly areas of the country by multinationals and other companies for their advertisements;

(b) if so, whether the Government consider it proper; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) Painting of advertisement on rocks in District Kullu in Himachal Pradesh was found to have taken place in the year 2002. Taking cognizance of the above and after considering the report of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC), the Hon'ble Supreme Court in IA no. 780 in WP(C) 202 of 1995 asked the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to get the rocks cleared of the advertisements by involving standard methods at the cost of the entities who had used those rocks. The work of cleaning of rocks has since been completed.

Use of Asbestos

4032. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 482 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd March, 2007 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of countries has banned the use of asbestos for health hazards; and

(b) if so, why India is not following the same principle?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Some countries have banned the use of asbestos for health hazards.

(b) In India, mining of asbestos is banned for reasons of health hazards. Further use of all varieties of asbestos except chrysotile variety is restricted for impact on health reasons. Presently only the chrysotile variety of asbestos is used in India in the manufacture of A.C. pressure-

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

pipes, asbestos cement sheets, brake-linings etc. The asbestos fibre levels are below the prescribed National and International norms and the health hazards of use of chrysotile asbestos are yet to be proved.

The Department of Chemicals and Petro-chemicals have sponsored a study to the National Institute Occupational Health, Ahmedabad to study the impact of Health and Environmental Hazards resulting from use of Chrysotile asbestos by the Indian Industry.

Ban on GM Crops

†4033. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many genetically modified crops have been banned in many countries of the world as they are unsuitable for human consumption;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) whether it is also fact that the genetically modified seeds which are being distributed by foreign companies have also been banned; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No Sir; No GM crop expressing approved events have been banned in any country because they are unsuitable for human comsumption.

(c) and (d) BT cotton seeds expressing four events is the only GM crop approved for commercial release in the country. Distribution of these seeds is not banned in the country.

Scheme for forest development in Goa

4034. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any schemes for forest development are in force in the State of Goa;

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